Recommendations of RCC on New Railway Zones

3436. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railway Convention Committee has expressed opposition to creation of new Railway Zones and Divisions;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what are the recommendations of RCC in this regard;

(d) whether the management cadres and staff federations have also opposed creation of Zones and Division; and

(e) if so, whether the Ministry would fulfil the commitment of creation of new Zones and Divisions and if so, by when all these Zones and Divisions would become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) The Railway Convention Committee did not favour the setting up of new zones being of the view that money spent on creation of additional Zones could be better utilised in areas like procurement of rolling-stock, doubling/renewal of railway lines and in electrification programmes. However, the Committee favoured creation of more Divisions.

(d) The officers and staff federations have opposed the creation of more zones/divisions.

(e) The new zones and divisions were proposed with a view to provide relief to the heavily worked zones, improve accessibility and enable the administration to have effective control over the compact zones leading to better service and customer satisfaction. However, owing to the resource crunch now being faced by the Railways, these zones and divisions will only gradually become operational depending upon the availability of funds for the purpose. No definite time frame can be indicated for the same at this stage.

Maintenance and repair of Railway bridges

3437. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to maintain and repair old Railway bridges in the country in the next five years;

(b) if so, the total cost of expenditure that would be kept for this purpose;

(c) in which States, the maintenance and repair work would be undertaken;

(d) whether any comprehensive programme in this regard has been prepared; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a). Yes, Sir.

(b) Rs. 1530 crores under Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF). In addition money will be spent from Depreciation Reserve Fund (DRF) and Revenue also as per needs and requirements.

(c) All States.

(d) and (e) Around 200 bridges have been identified for repair/rebuilding during next five years from the funds of SRSF and the works included in Works Programme Part-III (Green Book). Works to be executed with funding from DRF are in Works Programme Part-II (Pink Book). Any yearly arisings will be sanctioned in future Works Programme.

Target for rail transportation of goods

†3438. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for rail transportation of goods during 2001-2002;

(b) whether this target has been achieved; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) to (c) For the year 2001-2002, Indian Railway has originally fixed a loading target of 500 million tonnes which was subsequently revised to 489 million tonnes due to economic slow down in the country affecting the demand for rail transportation. Railway has achieved a loading of 492.23 (Provisional) million tonnes during 2001-2002.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.